



Awakening What's Next

The Language of Love

This exercise is designed to shift the way you speak to yourself in order to begin to build a supportive internal framework. Most of us know this language as we use it with other people but sadly we speak to ourselves quite differently. We seem to think that speaking critically to ourselves is motivating and if we don't, we are somehow letting ourselves off the hook. While it is counterintuitive to this belief, we actually can support change or address something we've not handled well much more effectively using supportive rather than critical language. This is because it releases the internal struggle. Think of your critical voice shaking an index finger saying bad boy/girl) and you who is trying so hard raising a middle finger and saying screw you! Once the criticism stops the energy bound up in the internal struggle is released and you are able to move forward.

Practice: As you go through each day, please notice when you speak to yourself critically. You may be very aware of this way of speaking to yourself. If you sense that you speak unkindly but don't notice it in the moment, simply tune into your thoughts and soon you will hear that voice.

Twice each day (and more if you like) do the following when you notice the critical voice:

- Take a deep breath, exhaling slowly
- Move your attention to your heart
- From this place of compassion ask yourself what would I say to someone else who was in the exact situation that caused you to criticize yourself.
- Take the time you need to really form in your mind what you'd say to another person
- Then with compassion, say those words to you
- Last take 2 to 3 minutes absorb the words of comfort and support that you've given to yourself
- If you notice your critical voice injecting anything, take another deep breath and go back to the words of support

Contemplate these questions at the end of your day using a journal if you like:

- What are you learning about the way you speak to yourself?
- How did you receive the experience of speaking lovingly?
- In what ways did you notice a difference in how you moved forward?